

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 0519

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XA ML UV MILI

SUBJECT: NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE 1975 STUDY GROUP

VISIT TO AFRICA

REF: STATE 027195

1. APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON PROPOSED
NWC VISIT TO UPPER VOLTA.

2. BORDER SITUATION AT MOMENT IS AT EXTREMELY CRITICAL
STAGE. JURIDICAL SUB-COMMISSION IS CURRENTLY EXAMINING
DOCUMENTATION PRESENTED BY BOTH SIDES AND SOCIAL SUB-
COMMISSION IS LOOKING AT TREATMENT OF EACH SIDES'
NATIONALS RESIDING IN OPPOSING COUNTRIES. MILITARY
SUB-COMMISSION IS PREPARED TO MONITOR TROOP WITHDRAWALS,
THOUGH DOUKARA SAYS HE WILL NOT PULL HIS TROOPS BACK
UNTIL THERE IS "CONCRETE PROGRESS" IN OTHER SUB-COMMISSIONS.
MALIANS ARE PERFECTLY SATISFIED WITH U.S. POSITION OUTLINED
STATE 275030. FRENCH, WEST GERMAN AND YUGOSLAV AMBASSADORS
HAVE ALL STATED THEIR GOVERNMENTS' POSITIONS ARE THE SAME
AS OURS. SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD SEVERAL OF HIS
COLLEAGUES THAT SOVIETS WILL NOT SUPPLY ADDITIONAL ARMS
TO EITHER SIDE IN RESPONSE TO BORDER DISPUTE REQUIREMENTS.
(SOVIETS HAVE MODEST ONGOING MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.)

3. NEVERTHELESS, MALIANS ARE VERY SUSPICIOUS, AND RUMORS OF
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VARIOUS TYPES OF AID TO UPPER VOLTA ARE WIDESPREAD.

FOR EXAMPLE, FOREIGN MINISTRY, ON BASIS OF GERMAN NEWSPAPER STORY ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF FRG MILITARY SALES TO UPPER VOLTA, CALLED IN GERMAN CHARGE AND WARNED HIM ABOUT HARMFUL EFFECTS SUCH AN ACTION WOULD HAVE ON MALI/FRG RELATIONS. DOUKARA TOLD ME YESTERDAY THAT HE KNEW THE UPPER VOLTANS HAD APPROACHED THE FRG AND FRANCE FOR ARMS AID AND HE "BELIEVED" THEY HAD ALSO APPROACHED US, BUT THAT ALL HAD REFUSED. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT UPPER VOLTA HAD APPROACHED THE ITALIANS, WHO WERE CONSIDERING SELLING UPPER VOLTA G-91 (FIAT) JETS, AND IF THEY DID SO, PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WAS PLANNING TO HIRE MERCENARY PILOTS TO FLY THEM. (I FIND THIS ASSERTION INCREDIBLE.) FURTHER DOUKARA SAID, HE HAD INFORMED THE MIXED COMMISSION THAT THE GOM WOULD NOT ALLOW ITS DELIBERATIONS TO DRAG ON INDEFINITELY WHILE UPPER VOLTA RE-ARMED, AND IN THE MEANTIME THE ARMED FORCES OF BOTH SIDES WERE ON ALERT.

4. GIVEN THIS RATHER SUPER-CHARGED ATMOSPHERE, THEREFORE, WE FEEL THAT A VISIT BY THE NWC TO UPPER VOLTA (OR MALI) AT THIS TIME WOULD IN ALL LIKELIHOOD STIR-UP RUMORS AND SUSPICIONS, PARTICULARLY IF THERE WERE ANY DISCUSSION OF U.S. ARMS SALES TO UPPER VOLTA. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE NWC VISITED MALI LAST YEAR, AND THAT WE COULD PROBABLY EXPLAIN IT ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, BUT THERE ARE MANY TYPES HERE WHO DO NOT WISH US WELL, AND WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THE NET IMPACT WOULD BE UNFAVORABLE. CONSEQUENTLY, UNLESS THE BORDER SITUATION IMPROVES DRAMATICALLY BETWEEN NOW AND THE DATE OF THE NWC VISIT, WE REGRETFULLY RECOMMEND THAT THE NWC VISIT SOME OTHER SAHELIAN COUNTRY. MCGUIRE

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